colors that might be more harmonious with the model and the glass of the bottle. Even the sea material itself, which nowadays is mostly colored putty or modeling clay, can be varied. I have seen tinted resin, acrylics and even colored sand used with effect.

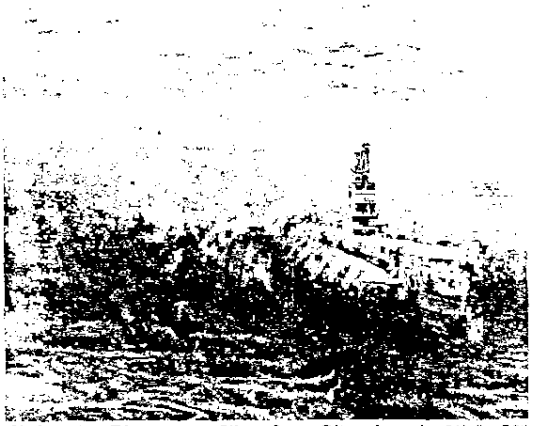
Once the model is constructed and in the bottle, the positioning itself can be used to heighten the impression. A slight rise to the bow can suggest the feel of a lifting wave. A small list to the hull adds to the illusion of the wind blowing strongly on the sails. A bit more space before the ship rather than aft provides the vessel with "some place to go".

The final finishing touches to the model include the sealing of the bottle, perhaps a signature on the end or bottom or an identifying plaque, and a stand, if needed. These additions to the ship-in-a-bottle have the same relationship as a frame does to a painting. If done properly they should be restrained and should complement rather than overpower or detract from the model.

The ship-in-bottle builder who works to combine the skills of the craftsman imaginatively with the basic principles of composition, color harmony, and contrast, will be able to create a piece of art enjoyed as much for its intrinsic beauty as for its nostalgic appeal. A static bottled ship will be transformed into one that is exciting and alive.

Perhaps it is this challenge—to explore limits beyond those available to the original practitioners—that has helped to bring about the resurgent interest in this traditional nautical art. If so, the modern ship-in-a-bottle can be considered a tribute to the tough, hardy men of the sea whose heritage it helps to preserve.

Commander Don Hubbard is the author of Ships-In-Bottles: A Step-By-Step Guide To A Venerable Nautical Craft *(McGraw-Hill, 1971). He is currently the president of the North American Division, International Ship-In-Bottles Association. For information about this organization, please write to P. O. Box 550, Coronado, CA 92118.*



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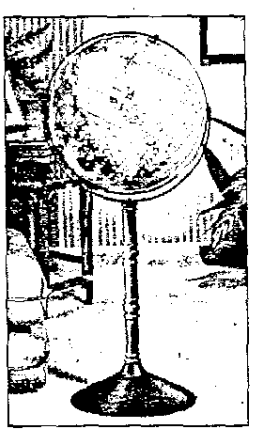

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